



NEWS MEDIA ADVISORY – issued August 13, 2012

Attention: Ag Media Assignment editors

Event: As drought conditions continue to impact Indiana, farmers and producers need to make important decisions about their land and livestock. It is critical for landowners and producers to understand all that is available to them as they make these decisions. As you know, information about USDA's technical and financial assistance has been shared in various ways over the past few weeks as it has become available. In order to clarify and summarize what is available, we invite you to attend a special session with USDA leaders. This will give you an opportunity to ask questions that are of interest to your readers or listeners.

In addition to programs and service available, issues that concern producers are:

- Cover Crops can be planted to take up excess nitrogen not used by failing crops without causing a penalty by being considered a crop. We have worked closely with RMA at the state and federal levels to ensure Cover Crops are not considered a 'crop', and do not put future crops in jeopardy of insurance benefits. (Susan says there is a 2012 destruction date that you may want to enter here?)
- There is a misconception by producers and insurance agents that a failed crop must be "destroyed" by disking/tilling, which would cause increased evaporation of any existing moisture, erosion (water and wind), associated nutrient loading to waterbodies, increase runoff, destroy soil health being built up by no-till, and make it difficult to seed Cover Crops.
- Landowners who 'destroy' a crop (through tillage or mowing) and plan to lease it for hunting need to be aware that the Indiana Department of Natural Resources and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service may interpret these activities as "baited" fields.
- Landowners are seeking options for livestock forage.

The heads of the following USDA agencies will make a brief statement:

- Jane Hardisty, State Conservationist, Natural Resources Conservation Service
- Julia Wickard, State Executive Director, Farm Service Agency
- Ronie Griffin, State Director or Jodie Tate, Deputy Director, Risk Management Agency

In addition technical staff from each agency will be available to answer specific questions.

When: Wednesday, August 15, 2012, 12:15 p.m. prior to the Indiana River Friendly Farmer ceremony.

Where: Indiana State Fairgrounds, 4-H Exhibit Hall Auditorium – 2nd floor, 1202 E. 38th St., Indianapolis, IN

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